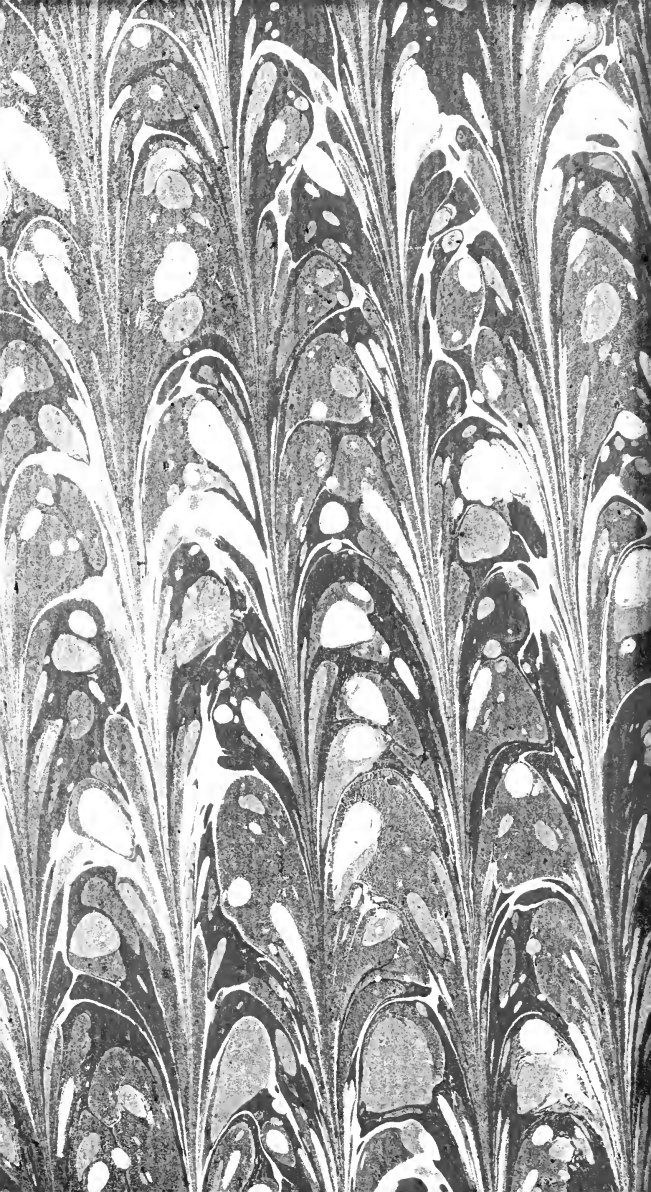




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To Robert Louis Stevenson's dear friend
Jules Simmon
from
Fanny S. de J. Stevenson

A

LETTER TO MR. STEVENSON'S FRIENDS.

"I have been waiting for you these many
years. Give me your hand, and welcome."

For private circulation.

MDCCCXCIV.

MY grateful thanks are due to the friends who have assisted me in the writing of this little book : to Bazett Michael Haggard Esq., H. B. M's. Land Commissioner, in Samoa ; to James H. Mulligan, U. S. Consul-General to Samoa ; to A. W. Mackay Esq., of the Friendly Islands and Samoa ; and to the Rev. W. E. Clarke, of the London Missionary Society. The first letter, which by accident was left unsigned is from my own pen.

I have ventured also to reprint Mr. Gosse's beautiful lines. "To Tusitala in Vailima," which reached Mr. Stevenson but three days before his death.

LLOYD OSBOURNE.

Dec. 17th, 1894.

LEFT with the task of writing to Mr. Stevenson's innumerable friends, to describe to each the story of his last hours amongst us, and the manner in which we laid him away in the grave he had chosen, the writer has shrunk from the work that devolved upon him. To spend days in the mechanical copying of saddening words and phrases, to endlessly reiterate the same expressions of sorrow, until they grow meaningless—seemed to him an offence to his own heart. He has ventured, therefore, to print this single letter as it stands, and has sought the assistance of a few intimate friends in order that their recollections may be presented with his own. It will be pardoned him, he hopes, that he has chosen a course so unusual, and one so contrary to convention. If some think he may have erred; if some draw back from the cold, impersonal type, with a longing for the more decorous obscurity of written words, let the spirit that inspired him be his excuse.

* * * * *

He wrote hard all that morning of the last day; his half-finished book, "Hermiston," he judged the best he had ever written, and the sense of successful effort made him buoyant and happy as nothing else could. In the afternoon the mail fell to be answered; not business correspondence—for this was left till later—but replies to the long, kindly letters of distant friends, received but two days since, and still bright in memory.

At sunset he came down-stairs; rallied his wife about the forebodings she could not shake off; talked of a lecturing tour to America that he was eager to make "as he was now so well," and played a game at cards with her to drive away her melan-

choly. He said he was hungry ; begged her assistance to help him make a salad for the evening meal ; and to enhance the little feast he brought up a bottle of old Burgundy from the cellar. He was helping his wife on the verandah, and gaily talking, when suddenly he put both hands to his head, and cried out "What's that ?" Then he asked quickly, "Do I look strange ?" Even as he did so he fell on his knees beside her. He was helped into the great hall, between his wife and his body-servant, Sosimo, losing consciousness instantly, as he lay back in the arm-chair that had once been his grandfather's. Little time was lost in bringing the doctors—Anderson, of the man-of-war, and his friend, Dr. Funk. They looked at him and shook their heads ; they laboured strenuously and left nothing undone. But he had passed the bounds of human skill. He had grown so well and strong that his wasted lungs were unable to bear the strain of returning health.

The dying man lay back in the chair, breathing heavily, his family about him frenzied with grief as they realised all hope was passed. The dozen and more Samoans that formed part of the little clan of which he was chief, sat in a wide semicircle on the floor, their reverent, troubled, sorrow-stricken faces all fixed upon their dying master. Some knelt on one knee to be instantly ready for any command that might be laid upon them. A narrow bed was brought into the centre of the room, the Master was gently laid upon it, his head supported by a rest, the gift of Shelley's son. Slower and slower grew his respiration, wider the interval between the long, deep, breaths. The Rev. Mr. Clarke was now come, an old and valued friend ; he knelt and prayed as the life ebbed away.

He died at ten minutes past eight on Monday evening the third of December, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

The great Union Jack that flew over the house was hauled down and laid over the body, fit shroud for a loyal Scotsman. He lay in the hall which was ever his pride, where he had passed the gayest and most delightful hours of his life, a noble room with open stairway and mullioned windows. In it were the treasures of his far-off Scottish home; the old carved furniture, the paintings and busts that had been in his father's house before him. The Samoans passed in procession beside his bed, kneeling and kissing his hand, each in turn, before taking their places for the long night watch beside him. No entreaty could induce them to retire, to rest themselves for the painful and arduous duties of the morrow. It would shew little love for Tusitala, they said, if they did not spend their last night beside him. Mournful and silent, they sat in deep dejection, poor, simple, loyal folk, fulfilling the duty they owed their chief.

A messenger was despatched to the few chiefs connected with the family, to announce the tidings and bid them assemble their men on the morrow for the work there was to do.

Sosimo asked on behalf of the Roman Catholics, that they might be allowed to recite the prayers for the dead. Till midnight the solemn chants continued, the prolonged, sonorous prayers of the Church of Rome, in commingled Latin and Samoan. Later still, a chief arrived with his retainers, bringing a precious fine mat to wrap about the dead. *

He too, knelt and kissed the hand of Tusitala, and took his place amid the sleepless watchers. Another arrived with a fine mat, a man of higher rank, whose incipient consumption had often troubled the Master.

* Everyone who went to visit a sick friend, supposed to be near death, took with him a fine mat, or some other kind of valuable property, to aid in paying native doctors, or conjurors, etc. "Samoa" by George Turner, p. 142.

“Talofa Tusitala !” he said as he drew nigh and took a long, mournful look at the face he knew so well. When, later on, he was momentarily required on some business of the morrow, he bowed reverently before retiring. “Tofa Tusitala !” he said, “Sleep Tusitala !”

The morning of the fourth of December broke cool and sunny, a beautiful day, rare at this season of the year. More fine mats were brought until the Union Jack lay nigh concealed beneath them. Among the newcomers was an old Mataafa chief, one of the builders of the “Road of the Loving Heart,” a man who had spent many days in prison for participation in the rebellion. “I am only a poor Samoan, and ignorant,” said he as he crouched beside the body. “Others are rich and can give Tusitala the parting presents of rich fine mats ; I am poor and can give nothing this last day he receives his friends. Yet I am not afraid to come and look the last time in my friend’s face, never to see him more till we meet with God. Behold ! Tusitala is dead ; Mataafa is also dead to us. These two great friends have been taken by God. When Mataafa was taken, who was our support but Tusitala ? We were in prison, and he cared for us. We were sick, and he made us well. We were hungry, and he fed us. The day was no longer than his kindness. You are great people and full of love. Yet who among you is so great as Tusitala ? What is your love to his love ? Our clan was Mataafa’s clan, for whom I speak this day ; therein was Tusitala also. We mourn them both. ”

A meeting of chiefs was held to apportion the work and divide the men into parties. Forty were sent with knives and axes to cut a path up the steep face of the mountain, and the writer himself led another party to

the summit—men chosen from the immediate family—to dig the grave on a spot where it was Mr. Stevenson's wish that he should lie. Nothing more picturesque can be imagined than the narrow ledge that forms the summit of Vaea, a place no wider than a room and flat as a table. On either side the land descends precipitously ; in front lies the vast ocean and the surf-swept reefs ; to the right and left, green mountains rise, densely covered with the primeval forest. Two hundred years ago the eyes of another man turned towards that same peak of Vaea, as the spot that should ultimately receive his war-worn body : Soalu, a famous chief.

All the morning, Samoans were arriving with flowers ; few of these were white, for they have not learned our foreign custom, and the room glowed with the many colours. There were no strangers on that day, no acquaintances ; those only were called who would deeply feel his loss. At one o'clock a body of powerful Samoans bore away the coffin, hid beneath a tattered red ensign that had flown above his vessel in many a remote corner of the South Seas. A path, so steep and rugged, taxed their strength to the utmost, for not only was the journey difficult in itself, but the extremest care was requisite to carry the coffin shoulder-high.

Half an hour later, the rest of his friends followed. It was a formidable ascent, and tried them hard. Nineteen Europeans, and some sixty Samoans reached the summit. After a short rest, the Rev. W. E. Clarke read the burial service of the Church of England, interposing a prayer that Mr. Stevenson had written and had read aloud to his family only the evening before his death :—

“ We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favour, folk of many families and

nations, gathered together in the peace of this roof ; weak men and women, subsisting under the covert of Thy patience. Be patient still ; suffer us yet awhile longer—with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavours against evil—suffer us awhile longer to endure, and, (if it may be), help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies ; if the day come when these must be taken, have us play the man under affliction. Be with our friends ; be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest ; if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching ; and when the day returns to us, our sun and comforter, call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts—eager to labour—eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion—and if the day be marked for sorrow—strong to endure it.

We thank Thee and praise Thee ; and in the words of Him to whom this day is sacred, close our oblation. ”

Another old friend, the Rev. J. E. Newell, who had risen from a sick-bed to come, made an address in the Samoan language.

No stranger's hand touched him. It was his body-servant that interlocked his fingers and arranged his hands in the attitude of prayer. Those who loved him carried him to his last home ; even the coffin was the work of an old friend. The grave was dug by his own men.

There are days in the life of everyone which from the nature of events occurring thereon, and owing to their peculiar personal importance can never be forgotten. There are, however, other days which to one attending and taking part in the accompanying events where such personal interest is wanting, may be by some subsequent circumstances either happy, sad, or important. ~~and so~~ become engraven equally with the former, on the memory. Of that latter class for myself and others may be reckoned the 4th October 1894, and the death of R. L. Stevenson on the 3rd December 1894, the circumstance to fix on the mind indellibly and sadly, its occurrences. The late R. L. Stevenson, author, novelist, poet, friend, having made his home here in Samoa, tried his utmost to be kind to all ; also taking the greatest interest in the welfare of the Samoan people, amongst whom he was living.

Especially was he good and kind to the many natives he employed, to the sick and wounded, and to those who owing to political events were in prison, trouble, and distress. And such was the appreciation of those whom he had so aided, that they came in a body and offered as a practical expression of their gratitude to thoroughly make (at no expense to him) an important piece of road approaching his house, Vailima. This offer was accepted by R. L. Stevenson. The chiefs and people faithfully kept their promise, and did an admirable piece of work in the road they made, nor did they request or hint at any payment. To commemorate this first spontaneous piece of improvement work done by the Samoans, R. L. Stevenson gave a great native feast at Vailima. Also he invited his alien friends and

the officials, Numbers of natives, chiefs, and others who had worked upon the road attended, and their families. R. L. Stevenson delivered an address, and it was translated into the Samoan tongue and read to them. The white participators in this ceremony were very interested on the occasion.—R. L. Stevenson was very happy—never was he apparently in better health, or spirits; and the good sense, and kindly feeling that pervades his address is only equalled by the admirable advice, illustrated so pointedly by examples, and warnings to be taken therefrom; the impressive nature of the style of delivery, and the excellent language in which his thoughts were clothed.

Mr. Stevenson said:—"we are met together to-day to celebrate an event and to do honour to certain chiefs, my friends,—Lelei, Mataafa, Salevao, Po'e, Teleso, Tupuola Lotofaga, Tupuola Amaile, Muliaiga, Ifopo, and Fatialofa. You are all aware in some degree of what has happened. You know these chiefs to have been prisoners; you perhaps know that during the term of their confinement I had it in my power to do them certain favours. One thing some of you cannot know, that they were immediately repaid by answering attentions. They were liberated by the new administration; by the King, and the Chief Justice, and the Ta'ita'ifono, who are here amongst us to-day and to whom we all desire to tender our renewed and perpetual gratitude for that favour. As soon as they were free men.—owing no man anything,—instead of going home to their own places and families, they came to me; they offered to do this work for me as a free gift, without hire, without supplies, and I was tempted at first to refuse their offer. I knew the country to be poor, I knew famine threatening; I knew their families long dis-

organised for want of supervision. Yet I accepted, because I thought the lesson of that road might be more useful to Samoa than a thousand breadfruit trees; and because to myself it was an exquisite pleasure to receive that which was so handsomely offered. It is now done; you have trod it to-day in coming hither. It has been made for me by chiefs; some of them old, some sick, all newly delivered from a harassing confinement, and in spite of weather unusually hot and insalubrious. I have seen these chiefs labour valiantly with their own hands upon the work, and I have set up over it, now that it is finished, the name of "The Road of Gratitude" (the road of loving hearts), and the names of those that built it. "In perpetuam memoriam," we say, and speak idly. At least so long as my own life shall be spared it shall be here perpetuated; partly for my pleasure and in my gratitude; partly for others; to continually publish the lesson of this road.

Addressing himself to the chiefs Mr. Stevenson then said:

I will tell you, Chiefs, that, when I saw you working on that road, my heart grew warm; not with gratitude only, but with hope. It seemed to me that I read the promise of something good for Samoa; it seemed to me, as I looked at you, that you were a company of warriors in a battle, fighting for the defence of our common country against all aggression. For there is a time to fight, and a time to dig. You Samoans may fight, you may conquer twenty times, and thirty times, and all will be in vain. There is but one way to defend Samoa. Hear it, before it is too late. It is to make roads, and gardens, and care for your trees, and sell their produce wisely, and in one word, to occupy and

use your country. If you do not, others will.

The speaker then referred to the parable of the "Talents" Matt. xxv. 14—30, and continuing, impressively asked :—What are you doing with your talent, Samoa ? Your three talents, Savaii, Upolu, and Tutuila ? Have you buried it in a napkin ? Not Upolu at least. You have rather given it out to be trodden under feet of swine : and the swine cut down food trees and burn houses, according to the nature of swine, or of that much worse animal, foolish man, acting according to his folly. "Thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed." But God has both sown and strawed for you here in Samoa ; he has given you a rich soil, a splendid sun, copious rain ; all is ready to your hand, half done. And I repeat to you that thing which is sure ; if you do not occupy and use your country, others will. It will not continue to be yours or your childrens, if you occupy it for nothing. You and your children will in that case be cast out into outer darkness where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ; for that is the law of God which passeth not away. I who speak to you have seen these things. I have seen them with my eyes—these judgments of God. I have seen them in Ireland, and I have seen them in the mountains of my own country—Scotland—and my heart was sad. These were a fine people in the past—brave, gay, faithful, and very much like Samoans, except in one particular, that they were much wiser, and better at that business of fighting of which you think so much. But the time came to them as it now comes to you, and it did not find them ready. The messenger came into their villages and they did not know him ; they were told, as you are told, to use

and occupy their country, and they would not hear. And now you may go through great tracts of the land and scarce meet a man or a smoking house, and see nothing but sheep feeding. The other people that I tell you of have come upon them like a foe in the night, and these are the other people's sheep who browse upon the foundation of their houses. To come nearer ; and I have seen this judgment in Oahu also. I have ridden there the whole day along the coast of an island. Hour after hour went by and I saw the face of no living man except that of the guide who rode with me. All along that desolate coast, in one bay after another, we saw, still standing, the churches that have been built by the Hawaiians of old. There must have been many hundreds, many thousands, dwelling there in old times, and worshipping God in these now empty churches. For to day they were empty ; the doors were closed, the villages had disappeared, the people were dead and gone ; only the church stood on like a tombstone over a grave, in the midst of the white men's sugar fields. The other people had come and used that country, and the Hawaiians who occupied it for nothing, had been swept away, "where is weeping and gnashing of teeth."

I do not speak of this lightly, because I love Samoa and her people. I love the land, I have chosen it to be my home while I live, and my grave after I am dead ; and I love the people and have chosen them to be my people to live and die with. And I see that the day is come now of the great battle ; of the great and the last opportunity by which it shall be decided whether you are to pass away like these other races of which I have been speaking, or to stand fast and have your children living on and honouring your memory in the land you received of your

fathers.

The Land Commission and the Chief Justice will soon have ended their labours. Much of your land will be restored to you, to do what you can with. Now is the time the messenger is come into your villages to summon you ; the man is come with the measuring rod : the fire is lighted in which you shall be tried ; whether you are gold or dross. Now is the time for the true champions of Samoa to stand forth. And who is the true champion of Samoa ? It is not the man who blackens his face, and cuts down trees, and kills pigs and wounded men. It is the man who makes roads, who plants food trees, who gathers harvests, and is a profitable servant before the Lord, using and improving that great talent that has been given him in trust. That is the brave soldier ; that is the true champion ; because all things in a country hang together like the links of the anchor cable, one by another : but the anchor itself is industry.

There is a friend of most of us who is far away ; not to be forgotten where I am, where Tupuola is, where Po'e Lelei, Mataafā, Solevao, Po'e Teleso, Tupuola Lotofaga, Tupuola, Amaile, Muliaiga, Ifopo, Fatialofa, Lemusu are. He knew what I am telling you ; no man better. He saw the day was come when Samoa had to walk in a new path, and to be defended, not only with guns and blackened faces, and the noise of men shouting, but by digging and planting, reaping and sowing. When he was still here amongst us, he busied himself planting cacao ; he was anxious and eager about agriculture and commerce, and spoke and wrote continually ; so that when we turn our minds to the same matters, we may tell ourselves that we are still obeying Mataafa. *Ua tautala mai pea o ia ua mao.*

I know that I do not speak to idle or foolish hearers. I speak to those who are not too proud to work for gratitude. Chiefs! You have worked for Tusitala, and he thanks you from his heart. In this, I could wish you could be an example to all Samoa—I wish every chief in these islands, would turn to, and work, and build roads, and sow fields, and plant food trees, and educate his children and improve his talents—not for love of Tusitala, but for the love of his brothers, and his children, and the whole body of generations yet unborn.

Chiefs! On this road that you have made many feet shall follow. The Romans were the bravest and greatest of people! mighty men of their hands, glorious fighters and conquerors. To this day in Europe you may go through parts of the country where all is marsh and bush and perhaps after struggling through a thicket, you shall come forth upon an ancient road, solid and useful as the day it was made. You shall see men and women bearing their burdens along that even way, and you may tell yourself that it was built for them perhaps fifteen hundred years before,—perhaps before the coming of Christ,—by the Romans. And the people still remember and bless them for that convenience, and say to one another, that as the Romans were the bravest men to fight, so they were the best at building roads.

Chiefs! Our road is not built to last a thousand years, yet in a sense it is. When a road is once built, it is a strange thing how it collects traffic, how every year as it goes on, more and more people are found to walk thereon, and others are raised up to repair and perpetuate it, and keep it alive; so that perhaps even this road of ours may, from reparation to reparation, continue to exist and be useful hundreds and hundreds of years

after we are mingled in the dust. And it is my hope that our far away descendants may remember and bless those who laboured for them to-day

Chiefs, old and young, were there and heard this address.—High chiefs, petty chiefs, and “talking men” (tulafales) and they replied in the same spirit in eloquent remarks. After that a great native feast ensued, which was shared of by all “faa-Samoa,” that is having the food spread on the ground, on a table cloth of green banana leaves. I ought to have said that before the address was given, “ava” was handed round with due form and ceremony, each chief being duly named to receive the laden bowl according to his rank. All this occupied a long time; the alien guests went away first, leaving the Samoans to follow at greater leisure. All was good feeling and cheerfulness.—So ended the Road Making Feast. Alas! the next gathering that I attended at Vailima was to form one of the company at the funeral of its deeply regretted owner, on the 4th December 1894, which interment took place sixteen hours after his cruelly sudden death.

“Cedes coëmtis saltibus, et domo,
Villaque, flavus quam Tiberius lavit :
Cedes”—(Hor: Carm: Lib, II.)

So I thought when I was following my dear friend to his last home.

“Cedes,” you leave your fine estate so carefully got together.

“Cedes,” you leave your well built house, and the demesne, and no longer see the limpid stream that laves their confines.—

“Cedes,” you leave all this! (but more—,)

“Cedes,” you leave your loving family, your devoted friends.

“Cedes,” you the writer “Tusitala”

leave your high reputation as an author ; no longer to enjoy the agreeable criticisms of an applauding public.

“Cedes,” you leave the bright sky and delightful sun that smiles and shines, here ; where you wished to dwell.

To enter the unknown, dark with uncertainty.

Interred high up on Vaea hill R. L. Stevenson looks down, upon his once happy home and the road that for him the Samoans made. The fateful path he took will soon be ours to travel—all will be forced along it—to that end. “Omnes eodem cogimur.”—BAZZET M. HAGGARD.

If Mr. Stevenson held a foremost place in the world of letters and was, as may be fairly assumed, one of the most popular writers of modern fiction, as a resident of Samoa, he was in that lesser world which revolves within the island kingdom, even more prominently conspicuous as a citizen—as the striking feature of its everyday life.

Beyond peradventure he was the first citizen of Samoa, whether considered with reference to his connection with its politics, or singly as to his place in private life ; to his station as the head of its society, or as the writer of its history.

A clansman by instinct and inheritance, he carried into ordinary affairs the practices that comported with the lofty ideal he entertained of the sphere and magnificence—not the ostentation—of chieftainship.

Coming to Samoa in the wearied and well nigh apathetic quest of health, which had in so many lands and islands seemed to elude him, lying ever a little way ahead, he found here yet more than he sought.

Health came slowly, wafted to him on every ripple of the balmy sea air, laden with the perfumes of tropic gums and flowers. The rent and broken land which ages had enriched, and wrapped with deep, fantastic forests of eternal twilight, on all sides, obedient to no order, lifted itself high into lofty mountains of perennial green, of eccentric shape and form :—broken, pinnacleed, gorged so deep into the bosom of the earth that no sunlight illumines their feastness. These mountains spoke to him of Scotland ; these dashing streams sang to him the same wild songs brawled into the ears of boyhood, in the Highlands.

He found here more than mere physical resemblance. He found a people in every way

congenial to his likings—to his ideal.

He was a poet, full of a poet's sentiment. These new people, one of whom he was to become; whose advocate, friend and idol he was in time to be, in their tribal institutions, strict regard for precedence, priorities and elaborate ceremonial, were to his mind, unconsciously, the survival of the Scottish clan with its corresponding unwritten code, yet lingering in the shadows of the palms in the South Seas. A glance at the opening chapter of "A Footnote to History" will afford confirmation to this assertion.

A people of fixed, unchanging institutions, of lofty ideals and traditions; simple, brave, generous. In their devotion to country, attachment to locality, he felt the presence of the characteristics of the Celt.

What cared he, the poet, whose wandering footsteps had made so many lands familiar, whose sympathies were world wide, that the suns of centuries had browned their skins! In the very tattoo that gracefully encircled their loins, he saw the expression in different form of the same sentiment proclaimed in the Tartan.

The foundation, the keystone, of all the institutions of these amiable people is hospitality. Hospitality profuse, inviolable,—carried to an extreme perhaps,—upon which all the framework of their society is reared. Here was a bond so strong, so complete, that nothing more was needful to their union.

The hospitality of Mr. Stevenson assumed as numberless forms as did the phases of his genius. It took every shape and direction, from showers of orders to tradesmen in favour of those whom he believed to be in need, running upward through all the succession of "malagas," feasts, dances, dinings, and demonstratious, which the native customs demanded, or European fashion had in-

troduced, the succession of which enters so largely into the isolated life of Samoa.

At every meal, throughout the year, his broad table was spread for the guests it rarely lacked. His home was, in this respect, like the castle of a feudal baron. The broad doors of Vailima swung always open. It was the center of the hospitality of Samoa, around which circled all there is of Samoa and its Society. How little of exaggeration there is in this, a prolonged stay in The Navigator's alone could tell.

To be the constant dispenser of hospitality was Mr. Stevenson's greatest pleasure. In it he found recreation from that arduous labour with which he taxed himself. In all, there was no self, no ostentation. In its midst, he was in his element ; it was his inspiration, his dissipation.

* * * *

The last entertainment over which Mr. Stevenson presided was a thanksgiving dinner on the evening of Thursday, November 29th., and the last speech, if such it can be called, that he ever made, was heard on that occasion. It was carried out in the spirit originally projected as an observance of Thanksgiving in accord with the American custom—a family feast to which a very few friends are bidden to promote good cheer, rather than an assemblage of guests selected by the considerations that prevail on other occasions.

The entire company which sat down to this final dispensation of his hospitality numbered eleven persons. Of these, six were of the family : five were guests. Not one of the family was absent.

It may sound improbable, to those in highly civilised countries, surrounded by all the systems and conveniences of modern

times, to say that, the entertainment and table would have been accounted elegant in any city of the world. It was all that a well ordered cuisine subject to constant demands, a trained service, and a blaze of silver, china, cut-glass, linen and flowers could unite to produce.

The feature of the feast was the appearance at the proper time of the regulation turkey, without which no thanksgiving dinner can, to an American, be complete. This was in the nature of a surprise to the guests. It is difficult to understand how this requirement of the occasion was complied with unless far away New Zealand was laid under contribution, weeks in advance. The cranberry sauce, an almost equally necessary feature, as was later in the evening confessed, was the clever substitute of the hostess, made from a wild, native, berry which had been found after many experiments to equal the cranberry. These little details are worthy of preservation only as connected with the last entertainment over which Mr. Stevenson was ever to preside, and as illustrating in some measure the thoughtful completeness of detail in the hospitality dispensed at Vailima.

Toward the close of the somewhat prolonged stay at the table, after the champagne had gone its rounds more than once, during an inviting lull in the conversation, one of the guests, attracting the attention of the company, and addressing Mr. Stevenson, said :

"I am half doubtful whether I shall conciliate your partiality by thrusting a toast upon such an occasion as this. However you may regard it, I am about to propose one which I am sure will find a hearty response in the breasts of all others whose good fortune it is to be present, and so coupled, I believe

as to compel a responsive echo from your own. Every guest who finds a place at your board tonight is but a pilgrim and a stranger. You have in this far away island, taken advantage of the day to make this, to us, a veritable thanksgiving festival, in which neither traditional feature nor bounty is lacking. You have preserved to us without omission a holiday dear to Americans. You have brought before us homes where our hearts linger: you have made us "Merry Men" and opened to us the delights of an "Island Night." For all this we are with reason thankful—thankful to you that we are enabled to keep good this day and make merry—to you who "chose to be an Englishman:" to you upon the magic of whose pen thousands in every land hang in deepest interest: to you whose genius weaves a rainbow of mingled smiles and tears around the world. We shall probably never gather as your guests on a like occasion, but may Heaven long continue to strengthen you, and may it bring many, very many other joyous thanksgivings to you and to yours. I drink the health and happiness of our hostess and our host."

There is little hazard in saying that no toast was ever drank with more hearty good will, the entire company rising in their places, Mr. Stevenson following the example and bowing repeatedly in acknowledgment as all again, after an interval, resumed their seats.

After a moment or two, and when all were again seated, Mr. Stevenson arose from his place at the foot of the table, Mrs. Stevenson being at the head, and standing slightly bent over for an instant; with hands resting on the table, responded:

"Mr. Consul General, I am not quite certain that you have been exactly fair, either in the surprise you put upon me in thus com-

pling me so hastily to respond, or in the very complimentary terms employed in regard to the little entertainment at which it is wholly our pleasure to see our friends along with us gathered. I believe I can with candor say I have long admired the Thanksgiving Day, as one of the most rational among the many days of national observances. It is a good day and I have been much impressed with the commendable spirit of religious gratitude, of the pious sense of obligation for blessings received, that lies close by the root of its institution and observance. That this household should in some way mark the day, and take note of its passing, seems to me but simply appropriate ; for when I look around me on my family gathered here—strikingly enough, as by chance does not often happen, that there is not one absent, not one empty place—I see with a single exception, in addition to myself, a family of Americans.

I hold an affection to your Thanksgiving Day. I have eaten perhaps many Thanksgiving Dinners, yet I am led on this occasion into communion with the spirit of the day and to feel and to be impressed with a sense of how much I too have reason to be, as I reverentially am, thankful for. There on my right sits she, who has but lately from our own loved native land, again come back to me—she to whom with no lessening of affection to those others to whom I cling, I love better than all the world besides—my mother. From the opposite end of the table, my wife who has been all in all to me, when the days were very dark, looks to-night into my eyes—while we have both grown a bit older—with undiminished and undiminishing affection.

Childless, yet on either side of me sits that good woman, my daughter and the

stalwart man, my son, and both have been and are more than son and daughter to me, and have brought into my life mirth and beauty. Nor is this all. There sits the bright boy, dear to my heart, full of the flow and the spirits of boyhood, so that I can even know that for a time at least, we have still the voice of a child in the house.

There is much, very much, with improving health and strength and a fair measure of success for which to be, as I am, religiously thankful. Yet to all may be appreciatively, gratefully added that good friends, the sincerity of whose well wishes is a gem beyond all price—some so soon to leave us, and whom we shall ever hold in grateful remembrance,—are gathered with us to make union with our gratitude.

Perhaps, indeed it is most likely, that this same company may never be again assembled. I have much cause to be grateful; I believe we all have. I am deeply grateful for your kindly sentiments, which I so much appreciate and I trust that many succeeding thanksgiving days may find each of you with as much cause of happiness, as many blessings to be thankful for, as I feel that I have to-night."

During the course of his remarks he assumed a tone and manner deeply impressive, so that after he had taken his seat, and the polite demonstration of applause which followed his remarks, had subsided, there was an appreciable interval—a lull—before the flow of conversation, interrupted by the toast, again found its tide and volume.

Dinner over, in time coffee followed on the veranda, as is the custom in this land of eternal summer. After perhaps an hour, the music of the piano gradually gathered the entire company about it in the ball room. Ballads, choruses, and rollicking song, suc-

ceeded each other, in a volunteered and ill-assorted succession, in accord with the mood of a jovial company. The impression of seriousness made by the earnestness, rather than the substance, of Mr. Stevenson's remarks, early wore away, and in many of the songs he heartily joined.

* * * *

Before one short week had passed, he lay peacefully sleeping the sleep of death, in that self-same room, proudly, it seemed, reposing on a mass of priceless fine-mats which he loved so much, brought in numbers, as funeral offerings, by mourning Samoan chieftains, who felt that their Chief had fallen. On wall, and bracket, and statuette, were still pendant the withering garlands of the Thanksgiving dinner.

JAMES H. MULLIGAN,

“ For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,”
“ Young Lycidas,”—

In conformity with R. L. Stevenson's well-known wish, the burial was of the quietest nature, and only a few of the more intimate and valued friends of the family were bidden to Vailima to pay their last respects.

In the large hall of Vailima—recalling sadly memories of many a past happy gathering—lay he whose courteous hospitality and endearing manner had so often enhanced the pleasure of those meetings : Silent for ever, he whose voice had so often rung out his cheery welcome.

O'er his bier hung the flags of three countries ; his own, and two claiming him as an adopted son. Around were heaped in profusion the wreaths, flowers, and valuable Samoan mats, visible tokens of the love, and sorrow, of many who though present in sympathy, were absent from the ceremonial.

About noon, the procession, headed by two members of his own family, was formed for the last journey, and from the beautiful mountain home which he has rendered famous throughout the world, and which will ever be resonant with his name—the Master was slowly borne to his rest.

Towering eight hundred feet above Vailima, and fourteen hundred feet above sea level, is the tiny plateau, “Tia Soalu,” hanging on the crest of a spur of Mount Vaea. On this lonely eminence, far from the busy haunts of men, away from the social smoke and smut of towns, overlooking the fairest part of the land of his adoption, the land he loved so truly and served so well, it was his wish that his dust should lie. No fitter resting place could have been chosen, “ His soul was like a star, and “ dwell apart,” and in solitary grandeur,

“his monument the everlasting hills,”; lies the frail tenement of an immortal genius. As Byron gave his life and fortune to Greece, in her fight for independence, so Stevenson was ever ready with pen and purse, to aid Samoa in her struggles for freedom. And may we not say also that at the last he has given his life for Samoa.?

It was but fitting therefore that the privilege of bearing his body to its resting-place should be granted to representatives of the race for whom he has wrought so ably. With them it was a labour of love, and borne by willing hands up the difficult ascent, all that was mortal of Robert Louis Stevenson was carried on Samoan shoulders to its rest.

From Vailima the path descends gently to one of the five rivers from which the estate takes its name. After crossing the river the path runs parallel for a few score paces, and then commences the ascent of an almost perpendicular hill side.

Up this ascent, a road had been cut through the thick forest during the morning by the willing hands of Samoan friends, as otherwise it would have been impassable.

Sad as was the occasion, the melancholy fitness of the surroundings was impressed on every one.

The track through the tropical forest, the trees cut down in their prime, and lying low with bowed heads on either side, the majestic mountain overhanging verdure clad, the sighing of the mountain winds in the tops of the forest trees, all the countless marvels of nature's luxuriant life—marvels which his pen has made familiar in every land—formed a fit frame for his farewell to the world.

Far more impressive, far more suited to the departed poet was sepulture like this,

than with the ashes of the mighty dead of his own land, and all the pageantry of civilised woe. The Fau, Toi, and Tavai trees, whispering in the breeze, and o'er shadowing the grave are more in keeping with his life and work than the "long-drawn aisle and fretted vault" that guard the dust of the many to whom he was a peer.

Slowly the mournful procession climbed the hill. At times the precipitous track with its many obstructions almost checked progress; the parties of bearers frequently relieved each other, each vieing with one another in doing their utmost in their labour of love.

The summit reached, the coffin covered with his country's flag rested on saplings over the grave, surrounded by friends of all nationalities bearing wreaths and bouquets of native flowers.

The beautiful service of the Church of England, read by the Rev. W. E. Clarke, was rendered doubly impressive by the unique surroundings; and yet another melancholy interest was added by the reading of a prayer taken from amongst the papers of the deceased, and written with his own hand.

The coffin was lowered reverently by loving hands into its narrow bed, and was directly hidden from sight by the wreaths and bouquets which almost filled the grave.

The Rev. J. E. Newell gave an address in the Samoan language; and the Samoans present seemed to realise that they had indeed lost their best friend, as they said their last "Tofa" (sleep well).

We parted there, "upon the self-same hill." But though his sun be set, for us a glory still beams amidst our tears. The "clearest voice in Britain's chorus" still rings clear across the gulf which he has

passed.

Still lives he in his immortal works !
Still lives he in our love ! and when the mes-
sage which tells of his untimely death, flashes
round the world, thousands of other hearts
which his works have cheered and elevated,
will turn in sorrow and regret to that moun-
tain-top in far-off Samoa, where sleeps he,
whom "to know was to love."

* * * * *

Tofa Tusitala ! Sleep peacefully ! on thy
mountain-top, alone in Nature's sanetity,
where the wood-dove's note, the moaning of
the waves as they break unceasingly on the
distant reef, and the sighing of the winds in
the whispering Tavai trees, chant thy re-
quiem.

A. W. MACKAY.

Tongatabu.

FOR nearly 40 years a band of Christian worshippers have met together each succeeding Sabbath, in the little English Mission Church, Apia, for the heart solace found only in communion with God.

A mournful company assembled there on the Sunday evening after the funeral.

It had been Mr. Stevenson's habit, since his first arrival in Samoa, to be present at the simple worship, as health and circumstances allowed.

He took a keen and sympathetic interest in all the religious and philanthropic activities of the little church, and was ever ready with his counsel and his purse. His first public work in Samoa was the delivery of a lecture for some religious enterprise connected with it; and quite recently, when a movement had been started to celebrate the Centenary year of the London Missionary Society by the demolition of the old structure, built in the fifties, and the erection of a new church more suited to the climate, and the modern needs of Apia, he gave the scheme his hearty sympathy, and headed the subscription with a liberal gift.

In the Missionary work which is being done among the Samoans themselves, Mr. Stevenson was especially interested. He was an observant, shrewd, yet ever generous critic of all our religious and educational organizations. His knowledge of native character, and life, enabled him to understand Missionary difficulties, while his genial contact with all sorts and conditions of men made him keen to detect deficiencies in men and in methods, and apt in useful suggestion. In our missionary literature Mr. Stevenson was much interested. He was a contributor to the monthly Magazine, printed in the Samoan language "The Sulu Samoa" ("The Samoan Torch") The first serial tale ever

read by Samoans in their own language was the inimitable story of "The Bottle Imp," which found its way into print in Samoa, and was read with wonderment and delight in many a thatched Samoan hut, long before it won the admiration of refined and cultured readers in the homes of civilization. The service in the church on Sunday evening, the 9th of December, was to be the final one previous to its demolition. The old and shabby little building has been the scene of many strange and many sorrowful experiences ; this its closing scene, was to be the most unique, the most pathetic of them all. The pulpit and Communion table were draped in purple ; fresh flowers had been grouped by reverent hands in loving memory of the dead ; the last words re-echoed by the old walls were a tribute of affection and regret for the loyal friend, the gifted genius, whom God has taken to Himself. "Our thoughts" said the preacher, "have been busy to-night in the remembrance of that brilliant life so suddenly snatched away. Soon the news will flash across the world that a Prince and a Leader has fallen, and thousands will lament, with us, the loss of that God created genius. To some of us who knew him well, and were privileged to call him friend, it is difficult to speak of him as gone. And, doubtless, he will be ever present with us in many a gracious memory, in the recollection of hours of happy converse, in the remembrance of deeds of friendship which "smell sweet and blossom in the dust," and which to-day, more than ever, challenge our admiration and our love. Yet he has gone from among us, the sparkling genius, the kindly neighbor, the loyal friend ! -gone in the full glow of laborious but congenial work ; with new enterprises laid out ; with the bright prospect of realization well

within his grasp ; while as yet there seemed his best and greatest work to do. So it is ever ! God calls the labourer home, the work unfinished, the building half complete, the book half written.....

How are we to deal with this dark problem of our lives ? Is death only so much loss, so much sorrow ? Not so ! God does not so deal with us ! There is healing in the wings even of the angel of death. It is a blessed thing for death to find a man in the full vigor of his life work, his hand upon the implements of his toil, his mind full of strong purpose, and high ideal. What if the work be uncompleted, if the workman has done enough to justify his workmanship, to demonstrate his nobleness, to leave his friends full of pride even at the unfinished fragments ? Blessed indeed is the man whom death finds doing service for his fellows, and such service as shall live in the eternity of influence, the immortality of thought !..... And so we, who loved him well, may take heart and give God thanks that thus He has called the Master home. His death was such an one as he himself would have chosen, and, despite our grief, there is much in it that fills us with sincere gratitude. To have died in the fullness of his manhood and mental vigor, happy in the assurance of success, rich in the possession of friends, happy in the respect and admiration of thousands to whom he has ministered intellectual delight, blessed with the faces of the loving, and the loved, around his dying bed :—

“ Nothing is here for tears, nothing 'to
wail or knock the breast.....
.....nothing but well and fair
And what may quiet us in death so noble ”

* * * * *

And, if the best part of the best kind of work has in it something enduring, and im-

perishable, what shall we say of the workman himself? He has gone from among us, but is that life which burnt with so brilliant and so strong a flame really extinguished?

“O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely has not been left vain.”

No! thanks be to God, life is stronger than death. No true life can be extinguished. The loyalty, which makes friendship so precious to us, the pure and right affections steadfastly and practically cherished, the intellectual flame which fires our hearts, the quenchless thirst for truth which fills the soul, are surely transferred to another state of being, to be there exercised in some yet more honorable way, and raised to higher power. Yes! God surely made us for something better than the grave! We could not, if we would, believe death to have power over spirit as well as body. God be thanked we are not left to our own surmises or reasonings! A voice has sounded out clear and full, assuring us that the victory is not with death. Jesus Christ has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. The Living One has stood upon our earth, and cried, “Because I live, ye shall live also” “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” And so we, to-night, thinking upon that small white cross that marks the lonely grave upon the Vaea heights, the symbol of faith in Him whose words we have just quoted, comfort one another with these words, and wait with hope and prayerful patience “until the day break and the shadows flee away.”

WM. E. CLARKE.

It was Mr Stevenson's intention to put up a notice by the new road with its name in large letters, and a few words of thanks to the chiefs. A board was prepared for the purpose, painted, and spaced for the lettering, when the chiefs arrived with their own inscription carefully written out. They begged to have this printed instead, and their wish was gratified. The notice now stands at the corner of the wide road, leading to the gates of Vailima.

O LE ALA O LE LOTO ALOFA

UA matou mäfaufau i le alofa sili o lana susu-
ga Tusitala i lana tausi alofa i le puapuagätia
o i matou i le fale-puipui ua matou sauni ai
se mea alofa ua sili e le pala e o'o i le faava-
vau o le ala ua matou elia.

O I MATOU :

Lelei, i Palauli	Tupuola, i Lotofaga
Mataafä, i Palauli	Tupuola, i Amaile
Salevau, i Siumu	Muliaiga, i Amaile
Po'e, i Siumu	Ifopö, i Manono
Telesö, i Siumu	Fatialofa i Lepä
Lemusu i Solosolo.	

The Road of the Loving Heart.

REMEMBERING the great love of his highness, Tusitala, and his loving care when we were in prison and sore distressed, we have prepared him an enduring present, this road which we have dug to last for ever. We are etc."

I.

Clearest voice in Britain's chorus,
 Tusitala !

Years ago, years four and twenty,
 Grey the cloudland drifted o'er us,
 When these ears first heard you talking,
 When these eyes first saw you smiling.

Years of famine, years of plenty,
 Years of beckoning and beguiling,
 Years of yielding, shifting, baulking,—
 When the good ship "Clausman" bore us
 Round the spits of Tobermory,
 Glens of Voulin like a vision,

Craggs of Knoidart, huge and hoary,—
 We had laughed in light derision.
 Had they told us, told the daring

Tusitala,

What the years' pale hands were bearing,—
 Years in stately, dim division.

II

Now the skies are pure above you,
 Tusitala ;

Feather'd trees bow down to love you ;
 Perfum'd winds from shining waters
 Stir the sanguine-leav'd hibiscus
 That your kingdom's dusk-ey'd daughters
 Weave about their shining tresses ;
 Dew-fed guavas drop their viscous
 Honey at the sun's caresses,
 Where eternal summer blesses
 Your ethereal musky highlands ;—
 Ah ! but does your heart remember.

Tusitala,

Westward is our Scotch September,
 Blue against the pale sun's ember,—
 That low rim of faint long islands,
 Barren granite-snouted nesses,
 Plunging in the dull'd Atlantic.
 Where beyond Three one guesses
 At the full tide, loud and frantic ?

III

By strange pathways God hath brought you,
Tusitala,
 In strange webs of fortune caught you,
 Led you by strange moods and measures
 To this paradise of pleasures !
 And the body-guard that sought you
 To conduct you home to glory,—
 Dark the oriflammes they carried,
 In the mist their cohort tarried,—
 They were Languor, Pain, and Sorrow,
Tusitala !

Scarcely we endured their story
 Trailing on from morn to morrow,
 Such the devious road they led you,
 Such the error, such the vastness,
 Such the cloud that overspread you,
 Under exile bow'd and banish'd,
 Lost, like Moses in the fastness,
 Till we almost deem'd you vanish'd.

IV

Vanish'd ? ay, that's still the trouble,
Tusitala ?
 Though your tropic isle rejoices,
 'Tis to us an Isle of Voices
 Hollow like the elfin double
 Cry of disembodied echoes,
 Or an owlet's wicked laughter,
 Or the cold and hornèd gecko's
 Croaking from a ruined rafter,—
 Voices these of things existing,
 Yet incessantly resisting
 Eyes and hands that follow after ;
 You are circled, as by magic,
 In a surf-built palmy bubble,

Tusitala ;

Fate hath chosen, but the choice is
 Half delectable, half tragic,
 For we hear you speak, like Moses,
 And we greet you back, enchanted,
 But reply's no sooner granted,
 Than the rifted cloud-land closes.

EDMUND GOSSE.

O LE PESE.

I LE MALIU O TUSITALA.

- (1) Ia faafogafoga lenei Lalolagi e
So'u faamatala atu o le mala ua fati
Na amata ona tupu, i le afiafi
Ua faafuase'i ona faatelevave,
Talofa ! Loia, ua tautala tagi.

TALI:—

Oi ma tagi faanoa, o le mafaufau.
Taloia ! Tusitala ua nofo i le vao.
Oi ma soona faatali pe toe sau,
Oi Vailima faatali ma faatali lava.
Se'i su'e, ma fesili i Alii o Vaa
"Faamolemole pe na sau Tusitala."

- (2) Oi Teuila e ! se'i e sau ia
Lolomi o se tusi se'i ou molia,
Se'i faasilasila ia Vitolia
Le alofa Tusitala, o loo ua si'itia.

TALI:—

- (3) Auē ! oi tagi e ma le atuatuva'e,
Pe ata manatu i aso o lumana'i.
O le a gasolo ai o Papalagi
E potopoto i le Kilisimasi.
Talofa Aolele, a tuu to'atasi !
Ma tama Vailima ua taufaitagi
Ina ua leai o se ta'ita'i.

TALI:—

- (4) Ane ! lo'u loto e ua utuina tagi,
Pe ata manatu i lou gasegase,
Ina ua tupu lava i le faatelevave.
A se'i mävae ma feiloa'i,
Ma se'i fetalai i se upu e tasi ;
A se'i matou 'au alofa a'i.

TALI:—

- (5) Oi ! e musu i vaai
I alii uma a gasolo mai.
Oi Tusitala e ! ua le o i ai,
Ua tauvale au tepa ma vaai.

TALI:—

SELEI I VAILIMA.

(Translation).

1.

Listen, O this world ! as I tell of the disaster
That befel in the late afternoon ;
That broke like a wave of the sea,
Suddenly and swiftly, blinding our eyes.
Alas for Loia who speaks, tears in his voice!

REFRAIN.—Groan and weep, O my heart in,
its sorrow.

Alas for Tusitala who rests in the forest!
Aimlessly we wait, and sorrowing ; will
he again return ?

Lament, O Vailima, waiting and ever
waiting !

Let us search, and enquire of the cap-
tains of ships,

“ Be not angry, but has not Tusitala
come ? ”

2.

Teuila, sorrowing one ! Come hither !
Prepare me a letter : I will carry it.
Let Her Majesty, Victoria, be told
That Tusitala, the loving one, has been
taken hence.

REFRAIN.—Groan and weep, O my heart, etc.

3.

Alas ! my heart weeps with anxious grief
As I think of the days before us ;
Of the white men gathering for the Christmas
assembly !

Alas for Aolele ! Left in her loneliness !
And the men of Vailima who weep together,
Their leader being taken.

REFRAIN.—Groan and weep O my heart, etc.

4.

Alas ! O my heart ! It weeps unceasingly,
When I think of his illness,
Coming upon him with fatal swiftness.
Would that it waited a glance, or a word

from him,
Or some token, from us, of our love !
REFRAIN.—Groan and weep O my heart, etc.

5.

Grieve, O my heart ! I cannot bear to look on
All the Chiefs who are assembling ;
Alas ! Tusitala, THOU art not here !
I look hither and thither, in vain, for thee.

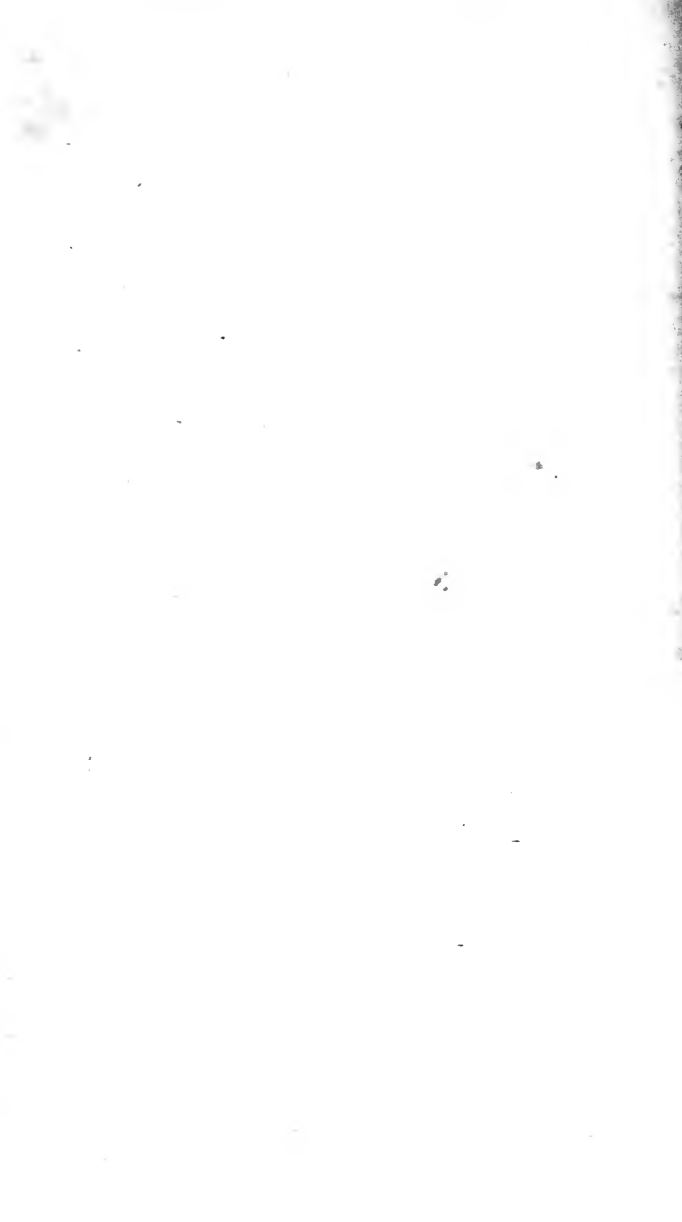
REFRAIN.—Groan and weep O my heart, etc.

REQUIEM.

UNDER the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :—
“ Here he lies where he longed to be ;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.”







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